DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 480 753 UD 035 874

AUTHOR	Miller, Jack
TITLE	America's Most Literate Cities.
INSTITUTION	Wisconsin Univ., Whitewater.
PUB DATE	2003-08-01
NOTE	12p.
AVAILABLE FROM	For full text: http://www.uww.edu/cities.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Bookstores; Educational Attainment; Libraries; *Literacy; Newspapers; Periodicals; Tables (Data); *Urban Areas

ABSTRACT

This study assessed factors related to literacy and literate behavior, rating the most and least literate U.S. cities. Data came from the U.S. Census Bureau, Audit Bureau of Circulations, American Booksellers Association, Yellow Pages, American Library Directory, and National Directory of Magazines. Thirteen measures were combined to form five indicators of literacy: booksellers; library support, holdings, and utilization; educational level; periodicals published; and newspaper circulation. Results found no strong regional influence. The top 10 included four western cities (Seattle, Denver, San Francisco, and Portland); two eastern (Washington and Pittsburgh); one southern (Atlanta); and two midwestern (Cincinnati and Minneapolis). The bottom 10 had a distinct "sun-belt" appearance (three in Texas, four in California, and one each in Florida and Tennessee). None of the eight cities with populations over 1,000,000 were in the top 50 percent. This population disadvantage diminished for cities under 1,000,000. Boston and New York, often considered more stereotypically literate, ranked 13th and 48th, respectively. They were very strong on a few factors causing them to be viewed as centers of culture and literacy but had large numbers of people apparently not buying newspapers and books, checking out library books, or graduating from high school. Other cities not stereotypically considered bastions of literacy did very well on at least a few factors. (SM)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

AMERICA'S MOST LITERATE CITIES

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-WHITEWATER

ED 480 753

by Jack Miller, Ph.D.
Chancellor and Professor of Education
University of Wisconsin-Whitewater

Americans are actively interested in issues affecting their quality of life and how that quality varies from place to place. People want to know how their community compares to others on a broad range of dimensions including crime rates, taxation levels, segregation levels, public health services available, and environmental quality, to name a few. The U.S. Environmental Protective Agency evaluates and reports on air quality by cities. Ladies Home Journal ranks the best cities in the United States for women on such issues as crime, lifestyle, and health factors. Forbes ranks cities by the best life quality for singles including factors such as the number of nightclubs and job growth.

People and businesses considering relocation are anxious to know how their current communities compare with potential new locations. Local governments and Chambers of Commerce pay careful attention to reports of studies on quality of life and use them in both promotion and improvement plans. One of the greatest topics of interest is educational or intellectual quality of life.

U.S. News and World Report annually evaluates colleges and universities on a broad range of variables. State education agencies release achievement test scores for all schools in a state, while the U.S. Department of Education monitors schools "needing improvement" and "persistently dangerous schools." These studies mainly assess the performance and behavior of in-school students and their schools at the primary, secondary, and post secondary levels. They are largely related to quality of schooling.

The purpose of this study is to assess a collection of important factors related to literacy and literate behaviors. This study rates the most and least literate cities in the United States. The focus is not to examine school achievement test scores, although such scores are undoubtedly correlated with many of the factors measured here. Rather, this study analyzes factors directly relating to the literacy of communities and their populations.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

UD 035 874

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
✓ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

B. Mattmiller
Univ. of Wisconsin-Whitewater

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

Whether these quality of life analyses are "accurate" is not so much a point of fact as it is of interpretation and operational definition. Obviously, communities that score highly on given indicators tend to be supportive of the research methodology, while those who are not highly assessed question the variables selected and their measurement. The point is that the "accuracy" of reports depends on acceptance of the operational definitions of the factors measured. For example, the value of the U.S. News and World Report study of colleges depends on acceptance of graduation rates of students, opinions of university presidents, and admission rates as important indicators of academic quality. Similarly, the value of this literacy study depends on acceptance of newspaper circulation, numbers of bookstores, and educational attainment levels as indicators of literacy. The 13 variables measured and their combination into five ranked factors form the operational definition of literacy.

DATA SOURCES

Data were initially drawn from six key data bases. These included:

1. U.S. Census Bureau
   United States Department of Commerce
   (United States Census 2000)
   http://www.census.gov/
2. Audit Bureau of Circulations
   (Copyright 2003 Audit Bureau of Circulations)
   http://www.accessabc.com/
3. American Booksellers Association
   (Copyright 2002)
   http://www.BookWeb.org/
4. Yellow Pages, Inc.
   (Copyright 2002 Yellow Pages, Inc.)
   http://www.yellowpagesinc.com/
5. 55th Edition
   American Library Directory
   (2002-2003 Volume 1)
6. The National Directory
   of Magazines 2002

Missing data, or apparent anomalies in the data, were resolved with direct phone call or email contacts with the original data sources. For example, this included contacting public libraries, school systems and newspaper publishers for either data completion or verification.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

THE VARIABLES

Operationally, defining literacy and literate practices was one of the most difficult aspects of completing this study. Thus, it is important to clarify, but not defend, the operational definitions. There may be better definitions of literacy, and if so, those factors will be considered and may be added to future analyses. The variables measured here and combined to form the literacy rankings in this study include thirteen separate variables grouped to form five factors of literacy.

Booksellers

Three variables are combined to form the factor Booksellers. Members of the American Booksellers Association (2002), which is an organization that represents independently owned bookstores with storefront locations, were indexed by city. Those member booksellers were then divided by the city population in order to calculate a ratio of booksellers to population. Yellow Pages (2002) listings were used to form two other variables. The number of retail booksellers and rare and used booksellers were each indexed. They were then divided by city population to calculate ratios of booksellers to population.

Library Support, Holdings, and Utilization

Public school library support was assessed by indexing the number of library/school media specialists and the number of public school students in the school district that serves each city as reported in the U.S. Census 2000. A ratio of librarians to students was calculated. The total circulation, volumes held, and branches operated for the public libraries that serve the cities in the study and reported in the American Library Directory (2002) were indexed. These numbers were then divided by the city population in order to calculate ratios of library services and resources available to the population.

Educational Level

Education Attainment was indexed with two variables. The percentage of the adult (over 23 years of age) population having a high school diploma or greater as reported in the United States Census 2000 was indexed. The percentage of the adult population having a bachelor's degree was also indexed.

Periodicals Published

The number of periodicals published in a city was indexed through analysis of the National Directory of Magazines (2002) database. Because of the high number of very small single publication publishers, it was deemed more appropriate to utilize the list of multi-periodical publishers of which there are approximately six hundred in the U.S. The number of multi-periodical publishers located in a city was indexed to form one variable. A ratio of those publishers to the population of the city was also calculated to form another variable.

Newspaper Circulation

Newspaper circulation was indexed as two variables. Newspaper circulation for the Sunday paper as reported in the Audit Bureau of Circulation (2003) official circulation averages for the six months ending 3/31/2003 was indexed. This number was then divided by population of the city to calculate a ratio of circulation population. The weekday circulation for the weekday variable, which included the Monday edition, was indexed and divided by the population to calculate a ratio of circulation to population.

POPULATION

The U.S. Census (2000) was used to identify the metropolitan areas over 250,000 in the United States. Thus, New York was the largest of the 64 communities rated, and Arlington, Texas, was the smallest evaluated in order to determine the most literate and least literate cities in the United States. Although many smaller cities could have been included, one-quarter of 1,000,000 people seemed to be a logical breaking point, and also helped to avoid some of the following measurement concerns.

MEASUREMENT CONCERNS

One important concern was overlapping and non-identical geographical areas used in different databases. For example, newspapers serve-and-are circulated in-areas larger than single cities. Many serve metropolitan areas, entire states, regions of the country, or the nation. Some school districts are citywide, while others are countywide. The same is true for library service areas. Although these geographical discrepancies are troublesome, they have been operationally resolved.

The issue of geographical areas came clearly into play with newspapers. Undoubtedly, the circulation of both daily and Sunday newspapers in metropolitan areas extend well beyond the boundaries of the city. Thus, populations not counted in the census basis for the city are subscribers and increase the circulation number. On the other hand, there are also suburban dailies with large circulations that were not counted even though some papers are distributed inside of the city limits. By way of operational defini-

tion, it was concluded that newspapers published in the city would be counted in the variable, and newspapers published outside the city in suburban areas for the primary purpose of suburban distribution were not counted. Therefore, newspapers like the Chicago suburban Daily Herald were not counted. Another example is that the Los Angeles newspaper group circulation was not counted in total. The Los Angeles Daily News, which is the one of the eight papers in the newspaper group published in, and primarily for, the Los Angeles market is counted, while papers such as San Gabriel Valley Tribune, and Pasadena Star, are not counted.

Another geographical issue concerning newspaper circulation is that some newspapers, while written primarily for the city and metropolitan area they serve, also have a much wider readership. For example, The New York Times, while printed mainly for New York, is marketed as a national publication. The Washington Post is often seen in a similar way. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution has a regional audience that extends well beyond Atlanta or Fulton County. Nevertheless, these newspaper circulations were counted in totals for the cities in which they are published.

More geographical issues concerning newspapers occurred in instances where two cities shared the same daily newspaper, and it was not published primarily for one city or the other. In those instances, the percentage of the population of the two cities was used to divide the circulation of the newspaper in ratio to the population of the two cities. This was true for cities such as Santa Anna and Anaheim, California.

Another geographical issue, not related to newspapers, where some anomalies occurred was library circulation. Most often data were associated with a city public library system, but in a few instances the data were aggregated at the county levels because that was the geographical area served by the library system. In several instances, the data could not be disaggregated for city branches only. In those instances, the county metropolitan statistical population was used to calculate the ratio. This was true for cities such as Indianapolis in Marion County.

Measurement concerns with newspaper circulation not related to geographic issues included eliminating newspapers specifically not written for a local audience. For example, the USA Today was not counted in the Washington, DC, figures, or The Wall Street Journal in New York City figures, or The Christian Science Monitor in the Boston figures. Only newspapers that were published daily were considered. Specialty newspapers for given industries were not considered, such as Women's Wear Daily, Daily

Racing Form, or Variety. Both English and non-English newspapers were counted to take into consideration large groups of Hispanic-speaking or bilingual readers. Thus, such newspapers as El Diario la Prensa, La Opinion, and El Nuevo Herald were counted in the circulations for New York, Los Angeles, and Miami respectively.

A population factor caused concern with some of the smaller population cities. This happened when a city was part of a metropolitan area in which it was not the largest city. Examples of this situation included Arlington, TX; Anaheim and Santa Ana, CA; and St. Paul, MN. This created issues in newspaper circulation because many people in the smaller city contribute to circulation of the newspaper in the larger cities such as Dallas, TX; Los Angeles, CA; and Minneapolis, MN.

Using ratios versus simple counts to index variables was also an issue. In some cases such as retail booksellers, the number of people in the city obviously has a direct relationship to the total number of retail booksellers that can be supported. In other instances, the relationship was not so clear. For example, should the ratio of periodical publishers to the population be used as the variable or should the simple count of periodical publishers be used? In some cases the market for periodicals is very local, such as Dallas Health and Fitness Magazine, Milwaukee Magazine, and San Diego Parent Magazine. The market for the number of such periodicals is in part related to the size of the local population, and therefore, should be indexed by a ratio. On the other hand, many periodicals-such as Field and Stream, TV Guide, or Sports Illustrated- have little relationship to the size of the population center in the city in which they are published because their appeal is not primarily to a local population. Thus, simple count is appropriate as an index of centers of publishing activity, and both of these two approaches were used and two variables indexed.

RESULTS

After each of the thirteen variables was calculated, they were rank-ordered by city, one through 64. These thirteen rank order scores were then combined to form five factors of literacy scores, which were also rank ordered. Finally, the five rank scores were numbered to form a simple score for literacy. The final rankings for all 64 cities are found in Table I.

TABLE I HERE

Each of the five factor rankings that contributed to overall rankings are presented as follows:

TABLE I-Overall Rankings

	CITY	POPULATION		
1	MINNEAPOLIS, MN	368,383	154.5	39.5
2	SEATTLE, WA	516,259	163.5	44.0
3	DENVER, CO	467,610	158.5	50.5
4	ATLANTA, GA	394,017	207.0	61.0
5	SAN FRANCISCO, CA	723,959	234.0	73.5
6	PITTSBURGH, PA	369,879	207.0	74.0
7	WASHINGTON, DC	606,900	249.5	78.5
8	LOUISVILLE, KY	269,063	216.5	81.0
9	PORTLAND, OR	437,319	261.0	90.5
10	CINCINNATI, OH	364,040	238.0	95.5
11	ST. PAUL, MN	272,235	286.5	96.5
12	MIAMI, FL	358,548	259.0	97.0
13.5	BOSTON, MA	574,283	310.0	101.0
13.5	LAS VEGAS, NV	258,295	247.0	101.0
15	COLORADO SPRINGS, CO	281,140	277.5	104.5
16	TAMPA, FL	280,015	270.0	105.0
17	ST. LOUIS, MO	396,685	318.5	113.0
18	NEWARK, NJ	275,221	364.5	119.0
19	BIRMINGHAM, AL	265,968	326.5	124.5
20	CLEVELAND, OH	505,616	322.5	127.5
21	NASHVILLE, TN	488,374	354.5	128.5
22	AUSTIN, TX	465,622	357.5	129.0
23	CHARLOTTE, NC	395,934	377.5	130.0
24	COLUMBUS, OH	632,910	383.0	133.5
25	SACRAMENTO, CA	369,365	350.5	136.5
26	OMAHA, NE	335,795	383.0	138.0
27	TULSA, OK	367,302	369.5	145.0
28	TUCSON, AZ	405,390	372.5	153.5
29	VIRGINIA BEACH, VA	393,069	411.0	156.5
30	OKLAHOMA CITY, OK	444,719	413.5	158.0
31	ALBUQUERQUE, NM	384,736	416.5	164.5
32	NORFOLK, VA	261,229	447.0	167.5
33	BUFFALO, NY	328,123	409.5	168.0
34	HONOLULU, HI	365,272	459.0	172.0
35	FORT WORTH, TX	447,619	437.0	173.0
36	DALLAS, TX	1,006,877	470.5	174.5
37	INDIANAPOLIS, IN	731,327	461.5	177.0
38	KANSAS CITY, MO	435,146	466.0	179.0
39	WICHITA, KS	304,011	483.5	182.5
40.5	SAN DIEGO, CA	1,110,549	473.5	183.0
40.5	NEW ORLEANS, LA	496,938	488.0	183.0
42	MILWAUKEE, WI	628,088	473.0	184.0
43	PHOENIX, AZ	983,403	472.0	184.5
44	OAKLAND, CA	372,242	488.0	192.0
45	CHICAGO, IL	2,783,726	516.0	200.0
46	ARLINGTON, TX	261,721	544.0	201.0
47	NEW YORK CITY, NY	7,322,564	526.5	204.5
48	PHILADELPHIA, PA	1,585,577	536.5	209.0
49	HOUSTON, TX	1,630,553	529.0	215.5
50	MESA, AZ	288,091	537.5	218.5
51	BALTIMORE, MD	736,014	536.0	219.0
52	SAN JOSE, CA	782,248	552.5	221.5
53	AHAHEIM, CA	266,406	584.5	229.0
54.5	LOS ANGELES, CA	3,485,398	576.5	232.0
54.5	TOLEDO, OH	332,943	575.5	232.0
56	FRESNO, CA	354,202	582.5	236.5
57	JACKSONVILLE, FL	635,230	586.0	238.0
58	MEMPHIS, TN	610,337	598.5	247.5
59	SANTA ANA, CA	293,742	678.0	256.5
60	SAN ANTONIO, TX	935,933	616.5	261.0
61	DETROIT, MI	1,027,974	655.5	264.5
62	LONG BEACH, CA	429,433	647.0	269.5
63	CORPUS CHRISTI, TX	257,453	678.0	279.5
64	EL PASO, TX	515,342	700.5	295.0

TABLE II-Newspapers

	CITY	POPULATION	
1	NEWARK, NJ	275,221	2.0
2	WASHINGTON, DC	606,900	5.0
3	DENVER, CO	467,610	7.0
4	MINNEAPOLIS, MN	368,383	9.0
6.0	ATLANTA, GA	394,017	11.0
6.0	MIAMI, FL	358,548	11.0
6.0	BOSTON, MA	574,283	11.0
8	TAMPA, FL	280,015	17.0
9	LOUISVILLE, KY	269,063	20.0
10	ST. LOUIS, MO	396,685	23.0
11.5	PORTLAND, OR	437,319	24.0
11.5	SACRAMENTO, CA	369,365	24.0
13	CLEVELAND, OH	505,616	27.0
14	PITTSBURGH, PA	369,879	28.0
15	LAS VEGAS, NV	258,295	29.0
16	SEATTLE, WA	516,259	30.0
17	ST. PAUL, MN	272,235	33.0
18	BUFFALO, NY	328,123	34.0
19	SAN FRANCISCO, CA	723,959	38.0
20.5	CINCINNATI, OH	364,040	40.0
20.5	KANSAS CITY, MO	435,146	40.0
22.5	CHARLOTTE, NC	395,934	46.0
23	BIRMINGHAM, AL	265,968	48.0
24.5	OMAHA, NE	335,795	50.0
24.5	DALLAS, TX	1,006,877	50.0
26	DETROIT, MI	1,027,974	52.0
27	FORT WORTH, TX	447,619	54.0
28	AHAHEIM, CA	266,406	56.0
29	SANTA ANA, CA	293,742	58.0
30	OKLAHOMA CITY, OK	444,719	61.0
31.5	VIRGINIA BEACH, VA	393,069	64.0
31.5	NEW ORLEANS, LA	496,938	64.0
33	MILWAUKEE, WI	628,088	65.0
34	PHOENIX, AZ	983,403	66.0
35	COLUMBUS, OH	632,910	71.0
36.5	TOLEDO, OH	332,943	72.0
36.5	FRESNO, CA	354,202	72.0
38	AUSTIN, TX	465,622	79.0
39	NASHVILLE, TN	488,374	80.0
41.0	HONOLULU, HI	365,272	84.0
41.0	CHICAGO, IL	2,783,726	84.0
41.0	BALTIMORE, MD	736,014	84.0
43	INDIANAPOLIS, IN	731,327	89.0
45.0	TUCSON, AZ	405,390	93.0
45.0	PHILADELPHIA, PA	1,585,577	93.0
45.0	LOS ANGELES, CA	3,485,398	93.0
47	NEW YORK CITY, NY	7,322,564	94.0
48	COLORADO SPRINGS, CO	281,140	96.0
48	WICHITA, KS	304,011	96.0
50	HOUSTON, TX	1,630,553	97.0
51	MESA, AZ	288,091	99.0
51	SAN JOSE, CA	782,248	99.0
53	ALBUQUERQUE, NM	384,736	101.0
54	SAN DIEGO, CA	1,110,549	106.0
55.5	TULSA, OK	367,302	111.0
55.5	MEMPHIS, TN	610,337	111.0
57	NORFOLK, VA	261,229	112.0
58	JACKSONVILLE, FL	635,230	113.0
59	SAN ANTONIO, TX	935,933	114.0
60	CORPUS CHRISTI, TX	257,453	120.0
61	LONG BEACH, CA	429,433	122.0
62.5	OAKLAND, CA	372,242	125.0
62.5	EL PASO, TX	515,342	125.0
64	ARLINGTON, TX	261,721	128.0

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

TABLE III-Booksellers

	CITY	POPULATION	
1.0	SEATTLE, WA	516,259	14.0
2.0	SAN FRANCISCO, CA	723,959	16.0
3.0	PORTLAND, OR	437,319	17.0
4.0	MINNEAPOLIS, MN	368,383	22.0
5.0	ATLANTA, GA	394,017	23.0
6.0	CINCINNATI, OH	364,040	25.0
7.0	DENVER, CO	467,610	28.0
8.0	LAS VEGAS, NV	258,295	30.0
9.0	ALBUQUERQUE, NM	384,736	31.0
10.0	LOUISVILLE, KY	269,063	36.0
11.0	TUCSON, AZ	405,390	39.0
12.0	PITTSBURGH, PA	369,879	41.0
13.0	AUSTIN, TX	465,622	47.0
14.0	ST. PAUL, MN	272,235	49.0
15.0	WASHINGTON, DC	606,900	50.0
16.0	TAMPA, FL	280,015	54.0
17.0	SACRAMENTO, CA	369,365	55.0
18.0	COLORADO SPRINGS, CO	281,140	59.0
19.0	MIAMI, FL	358,548	69.0
20.0	TULSA, OK	367,302	72.0
21.5	OMAHA, NE	335,795	77.0
21.5	OAKLAND, CA	372,242	77.0
23.0	CLEVELAND, OH	505,616	82.0
24.5	NEW ORLEANS, LA	496,938	88.0
24.5	COLUMBUS, OH	632,910	88.0
26.0	ST. LOUIS, MO	396,685	89.0
27.0	WICHITA, KS	304,011	93.0
28.0	CHARLOTTE, NC	395,934	94.0
29.0	OKLAHOMA CITY, OK	444,719	95.0
30.0	FORT WORTH, TX	447,619	98.0
31.5	MESA, AZ	288,091	99.0
31.5	SAN DIEGO, CA	1,110,549	99.0
33.0	MILWAUKEE, WI	628,088	101.0
34.0	BALTIMORE, MD	736,014	103.0
35.5	BIRMINGHAM, AL	265,968	104.0
35.5	FRESNO, CA	354,202	104.0
37.0	NASHVILLE, TN	488,374	107.0
38.0	HOUSTON, TX	1,630,553	111.0
39.0	VIRGINIA BEACH, VA	393,069	115.0
40.0	NORFOLK, VA	261,229	117.0
41.0	BUFFALO, NY	328,123	120.0
42.0	LONG BEACH, CA	429,433	121.0
43.0	BOSTON, MA	574,283	122.0
44.5	SAN ANTONIO, TX	935,933	124.0
44.5	ARLINGTON, TX	261,721	124.0
46.0	CORPUS CHRISTI, TX	257,453	129.0
47.0	KANSAS CITY, MO	435,146	133.0
48.0	AHAHEIM, CA	266,406	134.0
49.0	DALLAS, TX	1,006,877	137.0
50.0	SAN JOSE, CA	782,248	139.0
51.5	PHOENIX, AZ	983,403	143.0
51.5	INDIANAPOLIS, IN	731,327	143.0
53.0	PHILADELPHIA, PA	1,585,577	147.0
54.0	CHICAGO, IL	2,783,726	149.0
55.0	JACKSONVILLE, FL	635,230	150.0
56.0	MEMPHIS, TN	610,337	151.0
57.0	HONOLULU, HI	365,272	155.0
58.0	TOLEDO, OH	332,943	160.0
59.0	NEW YORK CITY, NY	7,322,564	162.0
60.5	LOS ANGELES, CA	3,485,398	164.0
60.5	EL PASO, TX	515,342	164.0
62.0	NEWARK, NJ	275,221	183.0
63.5	DETROIT, MI	1,027,974	184.0
63.5	SANTA ANA, CA	293,742	184.0

TABLE IV-Libraries

	CITY	POPULATION	
1.0	MIAMI, FL	358,548	37.0
2.0	LAS VEGAS, NV	258,295	38.0
3.0	LOUISVILLE, KY	269,063	46.0
4.0	TUCSON, AZ	405,390	49.0
5.0	BUFFALO, NY	328,123	50.0
7.0	CINCINNATI, OH	364,040	53.0
7.0	DENVER, CO	467,610	53.0
7.0	TULSA, OK	367,302	53.0
9.0	TAMPA, FL	280,015	56.0
10.0	COLORADO SPRINGS, CO	281,140	61.0
11.0	PITTSBURGH, PA	369,879	63.0
12.5	CLEVELAND, OH	505,616	64.0
12.5	BIRMINGHAM, AL	265,968	64.0
14.0	ST. LOUIS, MO	396,685	83.0
15.5	MINNEAPOLIS, MN	368,383	87.0
15.5	VIRGINIA BEACH, VA	393,069	87.0
17.0	SACRAMENTO, CA	369,365	95.0
18.0	FORT WORTH, TX	447,619	96.0
19.0	SEATTLE, WA	516,259	97.0
20.0	OKLAHOMA CITY, OK	444,719	103.0
21.0	NEWARK, NJ	275,221	104.0
22.0	NASHVILLE, TN	488,374	105.0
23.0	AUSTIN, TX	465,622	114.0
24.0	CHARLOTTE, NC	395,934	118.0
25.5	INDIANAPOLIS, IN	731,327	120.0
25.5	HONOLULU, HI	365,272	120.0
27.0	PORTLAND, OR	437,319	121.0
28.0	BOSTON, MA	574,283	124.0
29.0	ATLANTA, GA	394,017	126.0
30.0	MESA, AZ	288,091	132.0
31.0	PHOENIX, AZ	983,403	134.0
32.0	COLUMBUS, OH	632,910	135.0
33.0	WICHITA, KS	304,011	136.0
34.5	SAN FRANCISCO, CA	723,959	137.0
34.5	NORFOLK, VA	261,229	137.0
36.5	KANSAS CITY, MO	435,146	142.0
36.5	JACKSONVILLE, FL	635,230	142.0
38.0	OAKLAND, CA	372,242	145.0
39.0	TOLEDO, OH	332,943	146.0
40.0	WASHINGTON, DC	606,900	151.0
41.0	ST. PAUL, MN	272,235	152.0
42.0	OMAHA, NE	335,795	155.0
43.0	MILWAUKEE, WI	628,088	161.0
44.0	SAN DIEGO, CA	1,110,549	164.0
45.0	PHILADELPHIA, PA	1,585,577	165.0
46.5	ALBUQUERQUE, NM	384,736	166.0
46.5	HOUSTON, TX	1,630,553	166.0
48.5	BALTIMORE, MD	736,014	169.0
48.5	SAN ANTONIO, TX	935,933	169.0
50.0	MEMPHIS, TN	610,337	174.0
51.0	CHICAGO, IL	2,783,726	178.0
52.0	DALLAS, TX	1,006,877	179.0
53.0	SAN JOSE, CA	782,248	180.0
54.0	LONG BEACH, CA	429,433	181.0
55.5	NEW YORK CITY, NY	7,322,564	185.0
55.5	LOS ANGELES, CA	3,485,398	185.0
57.0	DETROIT, MI	1,027,974	191.0
58.0	EL PASO, TX	515,342	195.0
59.0	CORPUS CHRISTI, TX	257,453	203.0
60.5	FRESNO, CA	354,202	204.0
60.5	AHAHEIM, CA	266,406	204.0
62.0	NEW ORLEANS, LA	496,938	206.0
63.0	ARLINGTON, TX	261,721	225.0
64.0	SANTA ANA, CA	293,742	239.0

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

TABLE V-Education

	CITY	POPULATION	
1.0	SEATTLE, WA	516,259	4.0
2.0	AUSTIN, TX	465,622	14.0
3.0	NORFOLK, VA	261,229	15.0
4.0	COLORADO SPRINGS, CO	281,140	16.0
5.0	CHARLOTTE, NC	395,934	18.0
6.0	ALBUQUERQUE, NM	384,736	19.0
7.0	PORTLAND, OR	437,319	20.0
8.0	ST. PAUL, MN	272,235	20.5
9.0	SAN FRANCISCO, CA	723,959	22.0
10.0	VIRGINIA BEACH, VA	393,069	23.0
11.0	MINNEAPOLIS, MN	368,383	23.5
12.0	OMAHA, NE	335,795	29.0
13.0	COLUMBUS, OH	632,910	29.5
14.5	TULSA, OK	367,302	36.0
14.5	ARLINGTON, TX	261,721	36.0
16.0	NEWARK, NJ	275,221	38.0
17.0	DENVER, CO	467,610	38.5
18.0	BOSTON, MA	574,283	39.0
19.0	ATLANTA, GA	394,017	39.5
20.5	NASHVILLE, TN	488,374	40.5
20.5	WASHINGTON, DC	606,900	40.5
22.0	HONOLULU, HI	365,272	44.0
23.0	SAN JOSE, CA	782,248	45.5
24.0	PITTSBURGH, PA	369,879	46.0
25.0	LOUISVILLE, KY	269,063	47.5
26.0	INDIANAPOLIS, IN	731,327	48.0
27.0	SAN DIEGO, CA	1,110,549	48.5
28.0	JACKSONVILLE, FL	635,230	59.0
29.0	WICHITA, KS	304,011	64.0
30.5	BIRMINGHAM, AL	265,968	66.0
30.5	OAKLAND, CA	372,242	66.0
32.0	AHAHEIM, CA	266,406	68.5
33.0	TUCSON, AZ	405,390	69.5
34.0	KANSAS CITY, MO	435,146	73.0
35.0	DALLAS, TX	1,006,877	74.0
36.0	OKLAHOMA CITY, OK	444,719	74.5
37.0	TAMPA, FL	280,015	75.0
38.0	TOLEDO, OH	332,943	75.5
40.0	CINCINNATI, OH	364,040	77.5
40.0	NEW YORK CITY, NY	7,322,564	77.5
40.0	NEW ORLEANS, LA	496,938	77.5
42.0	SACRAMENTO, CA	369,365	78.0
43.0	CHICAGO, IL	2,783,726	81.0
44.0	LAS VEGAS, NV	258,295	85.0
45.0	MESA, AZ	288,091	85.5
46.0	FORT WORTH, TX	447,619	86.5
47.0	MILWAUKEE, WI	628,088	87.5
48.0	PHOENIX, AZ	983,403	91.0
49.0	MEMPHIS, TN	610,337	92.5
50.0	LOS ANGELES, CA	3,485,398	93.5
51.0	HOUSTON, TX	1,630,553	94.0
52.0	LONG BEACH, CA	429,433	101.0
54.0	PHILADELPHIA, PA	1,585,577	104.0
54.0	SAN ANTONIO, TX	935,933	104.0
54.0	CORPUS CHRISTI, TX	257,453	104.0
56.0	BALTIMORE, MD	736,014	105.0
57.0	FRESNO, CA	354,202	106.0
58.0	BUFFALO, NY	328,123	110.0
59.0	ST. LOUIS, MO	396,685	111.5
60.0	EL PASO, TX	515,342	112.0
61.0	CLEVELAND, OH	505,616	116.5
62.0	DETROIT, MI	1,027,974	122.0
63.0	MIAMI, FL	358,548	123.0
64.0	SANTA ANA, CA	293,742	128.0

TABLE VI-Publications

	CITY	POPULATION	
1.0	WASHINGTON, DC	606,900	3.0
2.0	ATLANTA, GA	394,017	7.5
3.0	NEW YORK CITY, NY	7,322,564	8.0
4.0	ST. LOUIS, MO	396,685	12.0
5.0	MINNEAPOLIS, MN	368,383	13.0
6.0	BOSTON, MA	574,283	14.0
7.0	SEATTLE, WA	516,259	18.5
8.0	MIAMI, FL	358,548	19.0
9.0	SAN FRANCISCO, CA	723,959	21.0
10.0	NASHVILLE, TN	488,374	22.0
11.0	CHICAGO, IL	2,783,726	24.0
12.0	PHILADELPHIA, PA	1,585,577	27.5
13.0	PITTSBURGH, PA	369,879	29.0
14.0	DALLAS, TX	1,006,877	30.5
15.0	ARLINGTON, TX	261,721	31.0
16.5	ST. PAUL, MN	272,235	32.0
16.5	DENVER, CO	467,610	32.0
18.0	CLEVELAND, OH	505,616	33.0
19.0	NEWARK, NJ	275,221	37.5
20.0	PHOENIX, AZ	983,403	38.0
21.0	LOS ANGELES, CA	3,485,398	41.0
22.0	CINCINNATI, OH	364,040	42.5
23.0	BIRMINGHAM, AL	265,968	44.5
24.0	COLORADO SPRINGS, CO	281,140	45.5
25.0	NEW ORLEANS, LA	496,938	52.5
26.5	HONOLULU, HI	365,272	56.0
26.5	SAN DIEGO, CA	1,110,549	56.0
28.0	MILWAUKEE, WI	628,088	58.5
29.0	COLUMBUS, OH	632,910	59.5
30.0	HOUSTON, TX	1,630,553	61.0
31.0	INDIANAPOLIS, IN	731,327	61.5
32.0	LAS VEGAS, NV	258,295	65.0
33.0	NORFOLK, VA	261,229	66.0
34.0	LOUISVILLE, KY	269,063	67.0
35.0	TAMPA, FL	280,015	68.0
36.0	SANTA ANA, CA	293,742	69.0
37.0	MEMPHIS, TN	610,337	70.0
38.0	OMAHA, NE	335,795	72.0
39.5	OAKLAND, CA	372,242	75.0
39.5	BALTIMORE, MD	736,014	75.0
41.0	KANSAS CITY, MO	435,146	78.0
42.0	PORTLAND, OR	437,319	79.0
43.0	OKLAHOMA CITY, OK	444,719	80.0
44.0	SAN JOSE, CA	782,248	89.0
45.0	WICHITA, KS	304,011	94.5
46.0	BUFFALO, NY	328,123	95.5
47.0	FRESNO, CA	354,202	96.5
48.0	TULSA, OK	367,302	97.5
49.0	SACRAMENTO, CA	369,365	98.5
50.0	ALBUQUERQUE, NM	384,736	99.5
51.0	CHARLOTTE, NC	395,934	101.5
52.0	FORT WORTH, TX	447,619	102.5
53.0	AUSTIN, TX	465,622	103.5
54.0	EL PASO, TX	515,342	104.5
55.0	SAN ANTONIO, TX	935,933	105.5
56.0	DETROIT, MI	1,027,974	106.5
60.5	VIRGINIA BEACH, VA	393,069	122.0
60.5	JACKSONVILLE, FL	635,230	122.0
60.5	AHAHEIM, CA	266,406	122.0
60.5	TUCSON, AZ	405,390	122.0
60.5	TOLEDO, OH	332,943	122.0
60.5	MESA, AZ	288,091	122.0
60.5	LONG BEACH, CA	429,433	122.0
60.5	CORPUS CHRISTI, TX	257,453	122.0

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The scores in these tables are calculated by using the composite of the individual variables ranking associated with the appropriate literacy factor. For example, the rank order for Sunday circulation and the rank order for weekday circulation are combined to form the newspaper factor.

CONCLUSIONS

In examining the most literate cities, there does not seem to be a strong regional influence. The "top ten" does include four western cities (Seattle, Denver, San Francisco, and Portland), but Washington and Pittsburgh represent the East, Louisville and Atlanta the South, and Cincinnati and Minneapolis the Midwest. On the other hand, the "bottom ten" has a distinct "sun-belt" appearance with Detroit being the only "industrial" city from the East or Midwest. California has four of the "bottom ten" cities, Texas has three, and Florida and Tennessee one each. This may well be associated with the high number of recent immigrants and lower incomes of individuals in these states.

The number of factors calculated as a ratio to size of the population seems to have had a negative effect on very large cities. None of the eight cities with populations over 1,000,000 were in the top 50% of the rankings. This population disadvantage seems to diminish or disappear for cities under 1,000,000. There are large and small cities in the "top ten," e.g. San Francisco and Louisville, and in the "bottom ten," e.g. Los Angeles and Corpus Christi.

There are some interesting results when looking at the cities that are often considered more stereotypically literate. For example, Boston and New York did not fare as well as might be expected with their rankings of 13 and 48. Certainly they scored quite well on some factors. New York City was clearly first in the number of periodicals published, but was below the median on percentage of the population who are high school graduates. Even with high total number of newspapers circulated, the circulation per person was well below the median. Boston was first in library holdings per person, and in the "top ten" in Sunday and weekday newspaper circulation, but below the median on all three of the retail booksellers per person variables and the percentage of the population who are high school graduates. In short, these cities are very strong on a few factors causing them to be viewed as centers of culture and literacy, but they have large numbers of people apparently not buying newspapers and books, not checking out library materials, or graduating from high school.

There are also some interesting counter examples of cities not stereotypically considered as bastions of literacy that did quite well on at least a few factors. Examples include: Newark, NJ, on newspaper circulation per person; Las Vegas, NV, and Buffalo, NY, on library circulation, and library branches per person; and Miami, FL, on retail bookstores per person.

In summary, the results of this study must be taken in total. A certain anomaly may positively or adversely affect a single variable, but when the thirteen variables are combined to form five factors and ultimately a single ranking, those idiosyncrasies tend to equalize themselves. Insofar as availability of booksellers, resources of libraries, educational attainment level of the population, periodicals published, and paid newspaper circulations are indicators of literacy, these are America's most and least literate cities.

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

REPRODUCTION RELEASE

(Specific Document)

UD035874

I. DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION:

Title: America's Most Literate Cities	
Author(s): Dr. Jack Miller, Chancellor	
Corporate Source: University of Wisconsin-Whitewater	Publication Date: July 2003

II. REPRODUCTION RELEASE:

In order to disseminate as widely as possible timely and significant materials of interest to the educational community, documents announced in the monthly abstract journal of the ERIC system, *Resources in Education* (RIE), are usually made available to users in microfiche, reproduced paper copy, and electronic media, and sold through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). Credit is given to the source of each document, and, if reproduction release is granted, one of the following notices is affixed to the document.

If permission is granted to reproduce and disseminate the identified document, please CHECK ONE of the following three options and sign at the bottom of the page.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 1 documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

Level 1

☒

Check here for Level 1 release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche or other ERIC archival media (e.g., electronic) and paper copy.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2A documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE, AND IN ELECTRONIC MEDIA FOR ERIC COLLECTION SUBSCRIBERS ONLY, HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

2A

Level 2A

☐

Check here for Level 2A release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche and in electronic media for ERIC archival collection subscribers only

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2B documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

2B

Level 2B

☐

Check here for Level 2B release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche only

Documents will be processed as indicated provided reproduction quality permits.
If permission to reproduce is granted, but no box is checked, documents will be processed at Level 1.

I hereby grant to the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) nonexclusive permission to reproduce and disseminate this document as indicated above. Reproduction from the ERIC microfiche or electronic media by persons other than ERIC employees and its system contractors requires permission from the copyright holder. Exception is made for non-profit reproduction by libraries and other service agencies to satisfy information needs of educators in response to discrete inquiries.

Sign here, → please

Signature: Brian Mattmiller	Printed Name/Position/Title: Brian Mattmiller, News Director
Organization/Address: University of Wisconsin-Whitewater	Telephone: 262-472-1194 FAX: 262-472-1196
	E-Mail Address: mattmi1@uww.edu Date: 9/2/03

(over)

III. DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY INFORMATION (FROM NON-ERIC SOURCE):

If permission to reproduce is not granted to ERIC, or, if you wish ERIC to cite the availability of the document from another source, please provide the following information regarding the availability of the document. (ERIC will not announce a document unless it is publicly available, and a dependable source can be specified. Contributors should also be aware that ERIC selection criteria are significantly more stringent for documents that cannot be made available through EDRS.)

Publisher/Distributor:
Address:
Price:

IV. REFERRAL OF ERIC TO COPYRIGHT/REPRODUCTION RIGHTS HOLDER:

If the right to grant this reproduction release is held by someone other than the addressee, please provide the appropriate name and address:

Name:
Address:

V. WHERE TO SEND THIS FORM:

Send this form to the following ERIC Clearinghouse:

However, if solicited by the ERIC Facility, or if making an unsolicited contribution to ERIC, return this form (and the document being contributed) to:

ERIC Processing and Reference Facility
4483-A Forbes Boulevard
Lanham, Maryland 20706

Telephone: 301-552-4200
Toll Free: 800-799-3742
FAX: 301-552-4700
e-mail: info@ericfac.piccard.csc.com
WWW: http://ericfacility.org